

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 6, please amend the fourth full paragraph as follows:

[0027] FIGURE ~~[[3]]~~ 3A and FIGURE 3B illustrate methods and systems ~~illustrates~~
~~a method and system~~ using a diffractive optical element;

Page 10, please amend the second full paragraph as follows:

[0038] In one preferred embodiment of the invention shown in FIG. ~~[[3]]~~ 3A,
arbitrary arrays of optical traps can be formed. A diffractive optical element 40 is disposed
substantially in a plane 42 conjugate to back aperture 24 of the objective lens 20.

Page 10, please amend the fifth full paragraph as follows:

[0041] The diffractive optical element 40 of FIG. ~~[[3]]~~ 3A is shown as being normal
to the input light beam 12, but many other arrangements are possible. For example, in
~~[[Fig.]]~~ FIG. 4 the light beam 12 arrives at an oblique angle relative to the ~~[[optic]]~~ optical
axis 22 and not at a normal to the diffractive optical element 40. In this embodiment, the
diffracted beams 44 emanating from point A will form optical traps 50 in focal plane 52 of
the imaging volume 32 (seen best in FIG. 1). In this arrangement of the optical tweezer
system 10 an undiffracted portion 54 of the input light beam 12 can be removed from the
optical tweezer system 10. This configuration thus enables processing less background light
and improves efficiency and effectiveness of forming optical traps.

**Page 11, please amend the third full paragraph, continuing to page 12, as
follows:**

[0043] In another form of the invention, arbitrary arrays of the optical traps 50 can be created without use of the telescope 34. In such an embodiment the diffractive optical element 40 can be placed directly in the plane containing point B (see FIG. 3B).